

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BOGOTA 02584 212010Z

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ACTION ARA-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 INR-05 SP-02 PM-03 L-01 SCCT-01

CU-02 PRS-01 NSC-05 NSCE-00 CPR-01 EB-02 /046 W

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R 211607Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO COMUSNAVSO FT AMADOR CANAL ZONE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7641

CNO WASHDC

CHMAAG LIMA

CNET PENSACOLA FLORIDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 2584

LIMDIS

ADMIN

REF: COMUSNAVSO MESSAGE 132100Z MAR 75

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS

SUBJ: COUNTRY CLEARANCE FOR RESEARCH IN COLOMBIAN VIOLENCE--

LCDR SALISBURY USN

1. WE FULLY UNDERSTAND THE SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH IN CIVIC ACTION, COUNTERINSURGENCY AND "LA VIOLENCIA". WE ALSO UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE THE VALUE OF IT AND THE ACADEMIC WORTH AND PURPOSES SERVED, INCLUDING LCDR SALISBURY'S OWN ACADEMIC INTERESTES. IT IS NOT THE RESEARCH IN AND OR ITSELF THAT IS THE PROBLEM. IT IS THAT IT WOULD BE CARRIED OUT BY AN ACTIVE DUTY OFFICER OF THE US GOVERNMENT WHICH UNAVOIDABLY IDENTIFIES AND INVOLVES THIS EMBASSY AND THE USG. AND THIS PRESENTS SOME DIFFICULT POTENTIAL PROBLEMS AND RISKS.

2. THIS DOES NOT REFER TO OBVIOUS SENSITIVITIES AND VISIBILITY ALONE. THERE ARE CONCRETE PROBLEMS THAT ALSO ARISE. WE HAVE VERY RECENTLY HAD A VERY SERIOUS PROBLEM
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PAGE 02 BOGOTA 02584 212010Z

INVOLVING AN ARMY FAO STUDENT, WHICH HAS AROUSED CONSIDERABLE

CONCERN AND QUESTION IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AS TO THE STATUS OF OFFICIAL US PERSONNEL ENGAGED IN THIS KIND OF "STUDENT" OR EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY. THE MINISTRY IS NOW "SENSITIZED" ON THIS POINT. AND THERE IS NOW IN FACT A REAL QUESTION BEFORE US AS TO WHETHER SUCH PERSONNEL ACCREDITED, ATTACHED OR ADMINISTRATIVELY SUPPORTED IN OR OTHER THAN "NORMAL" DIPLOMATIC MISSION ACTIVITY HAVE ANY IMMUNITIES OR PRIVILEGES UNDER THE VIENNA CONVENTION.

3. ON TOP OF THIS, THE RECENT CIA INTERVENTION CHARGES HAVE HAD THEIR EFFECT HERE. LEFTIST PUBLICATIONS HAVE BEEN MAKING SPECIFIC CHARGES AGAINST THIS MISSION, AND MOST RECENTLY AGAINST THE FAO STUDENT REFERRED TO ABOVE IN PARTICULAR. THIS HAS CREATED ADDITIONAL DIFFICULTIES FOR THE RESEARCH/STUDENT KIND OF ACTIVITY, AND HAS SENSITIZED MEDIA AND THE PUBLIC.

4. I AM AWARE THAT GENERAL VALENCIA TOVAR IS AWARE OF LCDR SALISBURY'S RESEARCH. BUT THAT IS NOT SYNONYMOUS WITH THE GOC, AND IT DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE RESEARCH WOULD BE UNDERSTOOD BY THE MEDIA, THE PUBLIC AND EVEN THE PRESIDENT/FOREIGN MINISTER.

5. FOR ALL OF THESE REASONS I CANNOT GRANT COUNTRY CLEARANCE FOR THE SEVEN MONTH IN-COUNTRY RESEARCH REQUESTED AND MUST IN FACT WITHDRAW EVEN THE ONE MONTH CLEARANCE. I SINCERELY REGRET THIS FOR I HAVE NO WISH TO COMPLICATE LCDR SALISBURY'S ACADEMIC PLANS OR IMPEDE ACADEMICALLY INTERESTING RESEARCH. IT IS MY CONVICTION, HOWEVER, THAT LARGER US INTERESTS AND RISKS TO US POSTURE HERE ARE INVOLVED.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RESEARCH, UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE, SECURITY CLEARANCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BOGOTA02584
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750100-0721
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750329/aaaaazuo.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 75 COMUSNAVSO MESSAGE 132100Z, 75 MAR 75
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 APR 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <14 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COUNTRY CLEARANCE FOR RESEARCH IN COLOMBIAN VIOLENCE--LCDR SALISBURY USN
TAGS: PINS, PINR, ASEC, CO, US
To: n/a
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006